

City Lights

A Business to Business Publication from Marietta Power

Winter 2003

StarBand™ Facility in Marietta Provides High-Speed Satellite Internet Connections to People in Remote Areas

From the foothills of a Hawaiian volcano to an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico to a flower shop in downtown Washington, DC, consumers and small businesses throughout the United States and the Caribbean rely on the StarBand™ facility in Marietta to provide them with reliable, high-speed Internet connections via satellite.

"Three years ago, StarBand became the first U.S. company to offer two-way satellite Internet service," said Tim Southard, Director of Network Services at StarBand. "We have customers at the tip of the Arctic Circle in Alaska, on the floor of the Grand Canyon, in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and in many other locations that don't even have telephone service."



For residential and small business customers in the continental United States, the StarBand system consists of a 24-by-36-inch satellite dish mounted on or near the customer's home or office. StarBand customers in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands require 1.2-meter satellite dish. A dish must have a clear, unobstructed view of the southern sky. Two standard coaxial cables connect the satellite dish antenna to a StarBand satellite modem, which attaches to a

computer through an Ethernet or USB port. Each customer's satellite dish sends requests to the Internet and receives Internet content via the satellite, which orbits the earth approximately 22,300 miles above the equator. The satellite communicates with the StarBand hub facility on Franklin Road, which has a direct connection to the Internet.

Editorial Focus

Arthur D. Vaughn's Perspectives on Public Service Will Benefit Marietta BLW

Arthur Vaughn brings a wealth of experience in the public service arena to his new position as a citizen member of the Marietta Board of Lights and Water (BLW).

Vaughn, currently employed as the Vice President of Finance and Administration for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta, began his one-year BLW term on January 8, 2003. His other community service activities include serving as a member of the advisory board for the United Way of Cobb County, treasurer and finance committee chair of the Cobb Community

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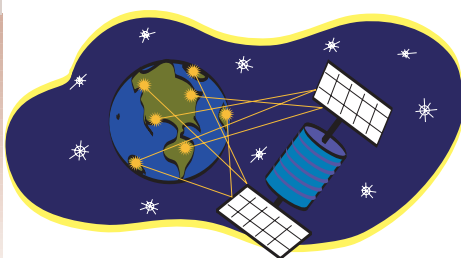


Arthur D. Vaughn assumes his new role as citizen member of the Marietta Board of Lights and Water (BLW).

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Marietta FiberNet Provides Better Reliability, Speed, and Price Performance

StarBand relies partly on Marietta FiberNet to provide the hub with this direct Internet connection. To ensure its customers have continuous Internet access, StarBand also utilizes two other infrastructure providers.

"We utilize multiple providers for the purpose of redundancy," Southard said. "Marietta FiberNet first contacted us a couple of years ago, but we initially chose other providers because it was so new."

"They kept in touch, however," he continued. "Finally, last fall, we needed another circuit and Marietta FiberNet offered an attractive price. It also had the capability to get us up and running faster than the competition."

"In addition, with other providers, we had to deal with two entities," Southard said. "We needed on organization to connect us to a network and another to provide us with Internet access. Marietta FiberNet offered us both pieces of the puzzle without any other middlemen. For all these reasons, we decided to purchase the circuit from Marietta FiberNet."

Since that time, Marietta FiberNet has lived up to every commitment, Southard added.

In addition to meeting the initial turntable for installation, Marietta FiberNet has what Southard calls "a culture of constant awareness."

"Marietta FiberNet continuously monitors the status of its network, which enables them to identify and resolve potential problems before a customer notices anything," he said. "That effort helps us ensure that we can provide reliable service to our customers."

Marietta FiberNet Keeps StarBand Up and Running During SQL Slammer Virus Epidemic

The reliable architecture of the fiber optic system became especially valuable to StarBand in January, when the SQL Slammer virus infected on-line services around the world. Among other things, the virus disrupted ATM service in many areas of the United States, subway service in Japan, and the Internet service provided by StarBand's other two vendors.

"We normally balance our Internet traffic load among all of our providers but, when the SQL Slammer virus attacked, it interrupted service from both of our other Internet providers," Southard said. "Fortunately, the worm had very little impact on Marietta FiberNet because of the way its network is designed. So we shifted all of our traffic over to Marietta

FiberNet for several hours, until our other providers could work out their problems."

"Marietta FiberNet has bursting capability that enabled us to handle the additional load," said Ed Godshall, Executive Director of Marietta FiberNet. "As a result, StarBand could continue serving its customers until the crisis had passed."

"Marietta FiberNet's performance during the SQL Slammer crisis again demonstrated to us that Southern hospitality flows all the way down through its organization, to the technical staff and call center as well as the sales staff," Southard said. "Like us, Marietta FiberNet keeps in touch with its customers and does its best to assist when a need arises."

"I believe that any Cobb County business would benefit from considering Marietta FiberNet as a source of data services and Internet connectivity," Southard added. "In addition to attractive pricing, Marietta FiberNet has connections near every business in the county, which will make it easy for them to bring the services on-line quickly."

To learn more about StarBand high-speed satellite Internet service, please visit www.starband.com. ✎



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Collaborative, and advisory board member of the Communities in Schools Marietta/Cobb. Vaughn also takes pride in his professional affiliations with the Institute of Management Accountants and the National Forum for Black Public Administrators.

Vaughn earned his bachelor's degree in economics at the Maxwell School of Public Affairs at Syracuse University in Syracuse, New York. He went on to earn

his master's degree in public administration at Clark Atlanta University, where he concentrated in finance.

Vaughn and his wife Octavia reside in Marietta with their two children, Kiara and Kennedy. A member of Turner Chapel AME Church, he also founded the Young Leaders' Academy of Cobb County, a mentoring program for boys in 5th - 8th grades. ✎

City Lights

is published by Marietta Power. Editor Peter Jonsson and the staff of *City Lights* welcome your questions, suggestions, and comments. Address letters to:

City Lights

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Employee Profile



Judy Spence

Judy Spence Takes Pride in Helping Marietta's Utilities Provide the Best Possible Customer Service

Customer Service Supervisor Judy Spence coordinates a wide range of activities intended to ensure that customers of Marietta Power and Marietta Water receive the best possible service.

"My responsibilities include supervising and overseeing customer service representatives in the cashier, billing and the service division, maintaining phone records, and making sure that our employees have the supplies and equipment they need to provide the highest level of service to our customers," Spence said. "If a customer has a particularly difficult problem, I will meet with the customer to ensure that he or she leaves our office in the best possible frame of mind."

Judy joined the BLW team in 1986 as a Cashier. As opportunities presented themselves she applied for different positions in the customer service division. Judy has worked as a Service Representative I, Billing Representative I & II, and has been in her current Supervisory position for the last 10 years.

As one of the longest-serving employees in the Customer Service Department, Judy has seen many changes in the way the BLW does business through the years. When she first

joined the organization, employees had to manually perform many tasks now handled by computers. For example, service applications, adjustments, cashing and meter reading were all a manual process. Today the automation of these and other processes allows the Customer Service Department to run more efficiently and to better serve their customers needs.

Yet even with all of these technical advancements and her experience in providing superior customer service, which includes more than 15 years in the hospitality and retail industries prior to joining the BLW, working with customers on a daily basis can present a variety of challenges.

"Each day brings something new," Spence said. "Each person has different needs and we do our best to solve their problems in a caring, courteous, and compassionate manner within the framework in which we have to operate."

She added that nothing makes her happier than hearing a customer express appreciation for the service that they received from the BLW staff.

"People stay so busy these days that they rarely have time to slow down long enough to thank us for the help they received," she said. "So when someone does stop to compliment a member of the BLW customer

service team, it makes for a great day."

In addition, Spence gets a tremendous amount of satisfaction from working with new employees and passing along knowledge to those who are eager to learn. She also enjoys working in an organization where everyone cares about the quality of the work they do.

"The BLW has a great group of dedicated individuals in every department who truly care about our customers and perform to the best of their capabilities," she said.

When she's not taking care of BLW customers, Judy enjoys quiet time with her husband Mike, a retired Marietta Firefighter and Emergency Medical Technician. Both have lived in the community their entire life and attended local high schools.

Judy is a graduate of Sprayberry and Mike is a graduate of Marietta High School.

The couple has two daughters, Kathy, age 29, and Shanna, age 25. Mike and Judy Spence also have a 9-year-old grandson named Kelson and a 3-year-old granddaughter named Morgan. In addition to spending time with their children and grandchildren, their hobbies include bike riding, collecting Native American art, and traveling to Native American historic sites. ✎

Send Us Your News

City Lights needs your news. We want to include information about Marietta businesses in our upcoming issues of *City Lights*. Please send us your press releases, company updates, and announcements so we can share your good news with your neighbors.

Also, we would like your comments on *City Lights*. What would you like to see added? What can we do to improve our publication?

We would also like to know if we've sent *City Lights* to the right person. If you or your associates would like to be added to our mailing list, drop us a line. ✎

Please send your information to:

Pete Jonsson or Elsie Neal
City Lights
 City of Marietta/Marietta Power
 675 North Marietta Parkway
 Marietta, GA 30060
 Or fax (770) 794-5195



Through April 20

"Tartuffe" By Moliere
Theatre In The Square
Call 770-422-8369 for information

April 2-20

"Howie The Rookie" By Mark O'rowe
Theatre In The Square
Call 770-422-8369 for information

April 11-May 10

"Arsenic And Old Lace" By Cobb Players
Little General/Cobb Community
Playhouse
Call 770-565-3995 for
information

April 12

Easter Egg Hunt
Laurel Park
11 a.m.
Free
Call 770-794-5601 for information

April 14-May 3

"The Sound Of Music"
By Barnbuster Musicals
Little General/
Cobb Community Playhouse
Call 770-565-3995 for
information

April 25

Glover Park Concert Series
Marietta Square
8 p.m.
Free
Call 770-794-5601 for
information

April 27

Taste Of Marietta
Glover Park
11 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Call 770-429-1115 for
information

Hop plant

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